

When the Editor "Puffed"

By DONALD ALLEN

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There was just one reason why the Widow Bidwell refused the marriage offer tendered her by Editor Flint of the Weekly Clarion and Fergus County Advertiser. Editor Flint had owned and edited the Clarion for many years. He had never married because he had been too busy making up and working off his edition of 900 copies, getting up and printing auction bills, writing thrilling local notices of wood wanted on subscription, and other matters connected with a weekly journal of twenty years ago. Some of his esteemed contemporaries sneeringly remarked now and then that he stole his editorials, but when it came down to writing out an auction bill they yielded him the palm.

"Auction! Auction! Auction!" read the average bill. "Take notice that on the 14th of September George Styles, farmer, will sell at public vendue all the live stock and other personal property on his farm on the Red Bridge road. Said stock consists of horses, cows, sheep and hogs and about 100 hens and geese. Sale to begin at 10 a. m., and all will go to the highest bidder."

There was no doubt about the success of the Clarion as a newspaper or about the success of Editor Flint as an editor. When he finally made up his mind to marry the Widow Bidwell, there was no doubt that he would be a success as a Benedict. He struck a snag, however. The widow had been obliged to turn to dressmaking since her husband's death, and she did not rank with the Four Hundred of the village, but she was a lover of poetry and she had dreams of poets. While this kept her grocery bill down, it interfered considerably with her getting out orders on time, and she calculated that one about offset the other.

The poetry loving widow had had fifty different poetic effusions published in the Clarion over the nom de plume of Flossie, but Mr. Flint had received the copy with a grunt, and the public had recovered from the shock each time within twenty-four hours.

The "poems" had been published to save carrying dead advertising. Mrs. Bidwell was rather surprised when the editor dropped in on her one evening and proceeded to say that he wanted her for the mistress of his house, but she soon replied and answered that there was an insurmountable barrier between them. He didn't look like a poet. She knew what he could do in the way of an auction bill, but the man who wed Flossie must look the part. She would attend to the poetry as heretofore, but he must at least have long hair, an aesthetic face and dreamy eyes.

The editor saw at once that he couldn't fill the bill. He wore his hair short, had a fat face, and his eyes were on the lookout for delinquent subscribers instead of looking into the far away. He therefore picked up his hat and walked back to the office.

However, the iron had entered Mr. Flint's soul. He had laid his forty-year-old heart at a woman's feet, and she had spurned it. He either wanted to commit suicide or secure revenge, and after figuring up that the Clarion plant was worth about \$4,000 he decided to hang on to earth. The first installment of his revenge was shown in his next issue, when he said:

"We take pleasure in informing our readers that a brother of the Widow Bidwell, who writes beautiful verse under the name of Flossie, has just died and left her a fortune estimated at \$100,000. She has our heartiest congratulations."

Of course the public read the item, and of course the widow read it. There wasn't a word of truth in it, but when people came and showered their congratulations she couldn't bring herself to deny the story. She was even thankful to the Clarion for publishing the caper. The issue of the following week pursued the matter further.

"We understand," it said, "that the fortune left to the Widow Bidwell by her deceased brother in the west will go \$50,000 better than at first reported. There are reports afloat that she will remove to New York city as soon as she comes into possession, and buy a residence on Fifth avenue. Her poem this week is the best thing in the paper."

There were more congratulations, and the widow got deeper into the web. It was so nice to be patted on the back and sort of soothed that she couldn't bring herself to deny the reports.

Between the second and third issues of the Clarion the editor had a caller. His ostensible occupation was selling Bohemian oats to farmers at \$5 a bushel and sailing mighty close to prison as a swindler, but he had the hair and face and eyes of a poet. Even the fat and healthy editor had to admit that. The caller wanted to insert a small ad. and ask about the Widow Bidwell. He had seen the notices in the Clarion about her legacy, and he wanted a few pointers.

Editor Flint praised the woman who had jumped on his bleeding heart. Aye, he spoke in highest terms of her, and even told Mr. Harold De Lisle how he could get an introduction to her. Then the third issue said:

"We had a pleasant call the other day from Mr. Harold De Lisle, who has just made a million dollars out of Pennsylvania oil. We understand that he may remain in our village for some time. Indeed, some rumor is con-

necting his name with that of a rich and prominent widow on Chestnut street."

Mr. De Lisle was duly introduced to the Widow Bidwell. She had no sooner set eyes on him than her heart began to palpitate. The poet had come. He looked and dressed the part. He also acted it. Nothing was said of her dressmaking on the one hand nor of his oil business on the other. They talked of sonnets and poems and idylls, and the widow was not in the hotel dining room to note the quantity of spread board and cabbage he got away with at dinner.

There was a fourth notice in the Clarion. The spurned editor hadn't much to do with auction bills just then, and he had time to keep track of affairs on Chestnut street. He had been told that Mr. Harold De Lisle was only a traveling agent for a gang of eastern swindlers, but he wasn't going to say so. On the contrary, what he said was:

"The wealthy and distinguished Mr. De Lisle is still with us, and if he has not won the heart of a Red City lady then rumor has gone far astray. The wedding will probably be a quiet affair, and bride and groom may make a honeymoon trip to Europe."

The Bohemian oats man who looked like a poet and the widow dreammaker who really wrote rhymes were not exactly frank with each other. He never asked the name of her brother or what disease he died of. He never asked if that fortune had come or when it might be expected.

On her part, she didn't ask in what part of the Keystone State his oil well was situated or what national bank he honored with his deposits. They read the Clarion and trusted in each other.

There were more farmers waiting to buy Bohemian oats and find a crop of weeds, but still Harold De Lisle lingered. There were dresses that customers were waiting for, but still the widow's sewing machine was silent. The languidness and lethargy of looking like a poet and being a poet beat sliding down hill all hollow. The fifth "puff" in the Clarion was a send-off.

"The event of the season occurred at the Methodist church two days since," it read. "As we have all along predicted, we have lost our fairest flower. In other words, Mr. Harold De Lisle prevailed upon the charming Widow Bidwell to give him her hand and heart, and the Rev. Mr. Peters made them man and wife in a very impressive ceremony. The happy couple left for Chicago immediately after, but may return next week to prepare for the jaunt abroad."

Ten days later the bride returned and at once notified all old customers that business was to be resumed at the old stand.

Ten days later in a distant state the bridegroom was talking up Bohemian oats. They had come to an understanding about money matters. They had understood that each had played the confidence game on the other and that they had lost \$500 between them.

Editor Flint of the Clarion and Fergus County Advertiser sat down and wrote an auction bill for Farmer Jones and told him what the price for 200 copies would be, and as he found himself setting it up he found himself saying to himself:

"Oh, I don't know. I don't seem to have so much ache under my vest as I did. I shouldn't wonder if I recovered from the blow in time."

Sailor's Story of Jungle Surgery.
"There wuz this here black Kamerun savage, naked as an animal," said the sailor, "and there wuz this explorer in his pretty suit of white drillin', and there wuz a Kamerun medicine man with a headress of human bones. They stood under a palm tree. I sat on a log and watched 'em. The medicine man put the right arms of the savage and the explorer close together, and then a vein in the white arm and then an artery in the black arm. The blood come a-gushin' and a-gushin' out of the black arm, and the medicine man scooped it up in the hollow of his hand and rubbed it into the nicked white arm. He must 'a' rubbed in a pint before he closed the wound. Transfusion of blood is what they call it. They say it saves a white man from jungle fever and from all the evils of the miasma, of the hot swamps, of the damp heat, of the rotting vegetation. They say Stanley had black blood transfused into his'n eight times. That is how he stood Africa. I know it's a common thing for African explorers to go through the transfusion process. And I'll tell you a funny thing about it. It makes the hair thicker and darker and it darkens the skin a couple of shades." —New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Oldest Body of Human Being.
The oldest body of any human being reposes in the Egyptian gallery of the British museum. It is the body of a man who was buried in a shallow grave hollowed out of the sandstone on the west bank of the Nile in upper Egypt. This man must have lived along the banks of the Nile before the time of the earliest mummified king which the museum possesses, before the time of Menes, who was supposed to have ruled Egypt at least 5000 B. C. There were previous to that time two prehistoric races, one the conquerors and the other the conquered, from which sprang the Egyptian race of the earliest dynasties. It is with these remote stocks that this man had to do. Considering the condition in which he was found, it is evident that he was associated with a late period of the new stone age of Egypt. He was buried in a characteristic neolithic grave, with his neolithic pots and instruments of flint about him. There is of course no inscription of any kind on the pots, knives or grave, all having been long before the invention of any written language. —American Antiquarian.

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NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT.
Notice is hereby given that the accounts of the subscriber, the administrator with the will annexed of D. Porter Lord, deceased, will be audited and settled by the Surrogate and reported for settlement to the Orphans' Court of the County of Essex, on Thursday, the ninth day of June next.
Dated May 17, 1906. MARTIN J. SYNNOTT.

NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT.
Notice is hereby given that the accounts of the subscriber, the executor of GEORGE E. HUNNELL, deceased, will be audited and settled by the Surrogate and reported for settlement to the Orphans' Court of the County of Essex, on Thursday, the ninth day of June next.
Dated April 27, 1906. MYRON T. PRICHARD.
McEWAN & McEWAN, Proctors.

ESTATE OF SETH OOK COMSTOCK
deceased.
Pursuant to the order of GEORGE E. HUNNELL, Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day made, on the application of the undersigned executrix of said deceased, notice is hereby given to the creditors of said deceased to exhibit their claims and demands against the estate of said deceased, within nine months from this date, or they will be forever barred from presenting or recovering the same against the subscriber.
Dated May 17, 1906. BERTHA T. COMSTOCK.
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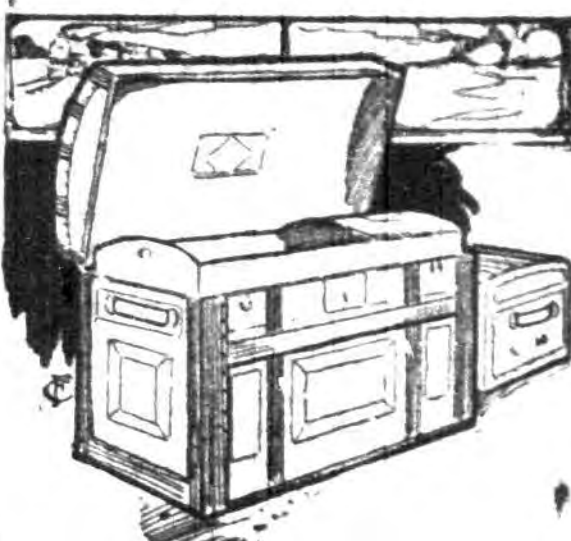
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